

3/3/08 - Monday, March 3, 2008

CITY OF EAU CLAIRE

PLAN COMMISSION MINUTES

Meeting of March 3, 2008

City Hall, Council Chambers

7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Messrs. Davis, FitzGerald, Kaiser, Kayser, Larson, Levandowski, Hughes, Vande Loo, Waedt

Staff Present: Messrs. Genskow, Noel, Tufte

The meeting was chaired by Mr. Levandowski.

1. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (CZ-0803) - University>

Darryl Tufte stated this request is to allow university>

Doug Ottum, 3741 Nimitz Street, spoke on behalf of the applicant and church. He said the arrangement would be temporary until Concordia finds other space. He saw the use as a natural extension of the services the church provides and stated the church does not intend on making the building into an educational center.

Tamara Berg, 812 E. Hamilton Avenue, spoke in opposition. She stated>

Larry Smith, 3241 Nimitz Street, also spoke in opposition. He had concerns with a business being run out of a church and increased traffic.

Betty Butler, 3249 Nimitz Street, stated the agreement between the church and university was vague and should specify a time limit for the accessory use.

Mr. Davis believed the proposed use would only marginally increase traffic in the area - especially when compared to the traffic the church generates on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays.

Both Mr. Kaiser and Mr. Kayser spoke in opposition because they saw the use not compatible with the existing use and with what type of zoning district the church was in.

Many commissioners agreed that a condition of approval should be a time limit for the use.

Mr. Davis motioned to approve the request. Mr. Vande Loo seconded. Mr. Davis amended his motion to include a time limit to December 31st of 2009. Motioned carried. Mr. Kaiser and Mr. Kayser voted no.

2. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (CZ-0804) - Duplex in R-4 District

Ned Noel presented the applicant's request to convert a triplex to a duplex in a R-4 district at 148 Newton Street. A conditional use permit is needed for the lower density residential project in a higher density district. The required parking of four stalls will be met with one stall accessed off the shared driveway and three in the detached garage.

Applicant, Chad Olson, spoke in favor of the project and described the conversion of the triplex to a duplex.

No one appeared in opposition.

Mr. Kaiser moved to approve the request. Mr. Vande Loo seconded and the motion carried.

3. SITE PLAN (SP-0807) - Rooming House Expansion

Darryl Tufte presented the staff report in which the applicant would like to add a second bedroom in the basement of a rooming house located at 431 Washington Street. The commission approved a site plan for this rooming house in 2007, which allowed the first bedroom in the basement. The site has enough parking and the property must meet all applicable building codes.

Mr. Kasyer was in opposition because of density increase in the Third Ward Neighborhood.

Mr. Kaiser motioned to approve the request subject to meeting building codes. Mr. Larson seconded and the motioned carried. Mr. Kasyer voted no.

4. DISCUSSION/DIRECTION

A. Utility Boxes

Ned Noel presented the staff memo and proposed Outdoor Service Cabinet Design Manual. He displayed various photographs which>

The commission thought the issue important enough to regulate this type of infrastructure component. They wanted staff to share the manual with utility providers and phone companies to get their input. Landscape screening was discussed and whether to require an escrow so that it is properly installed. The merit of larger cabinets but less in number was addressed, and if compensation could be provided to a property owner who got stuck with a larger cabinet in their front yard. Design options were discussed, and if companies could partly locate cabinets grade so their height is reduced. Staff would come back to the commission with more information after meeting with the utility providers.

B. Exterior Lighting

Darryl Tufte presented the staff memo and regulations the City currently has in place regarding outdoor lighting. Staff arranged the regulations into a convenient manual as the commission requested when this item was last before them. The actual amount of light emitted is currently restricted in the City by the State Energy Code, which mandates light for sites/uses by the amount of wattage. Mr. Tufte addressed other methods of controlling light on properties - such as establishing an overall cap for lumens per acre and light zones. The State has provided a model ordinance that gives more detailed information if these requirements are preferred than the wattage standard. Mr. Tufte asked the commission for their thoughts on the current regulations and if they were interested in other options.

Generally, commissioners favored going to lumens per acre cap compared to the wattage standard and thought light zones had some merit. They felt this would provide more accuracy in determining the amount of light emitted from a site. However, they thought smaller, less light intensive sites, like duplexes, would not have to follow a lumens cap. They wanted to not specify different types of lighting technology because it continues to evolve. The commission believed to also include electrical contractors, businesses, Dark Sky advocates, the County, and other stakeholders in the process. Staff would return to the commission with more information after meeting with these interest groups.

C. Code Compliance Items

Mr. Larson stated his concerns with drivers not yielding to pedestrians in crossings especially around the university campus. He thought it is an education issue that people need to know the rules. Staff could arrange for the transportation engineer to come speak at a future meeting.

D. Future Agenda Items

Mr. Davis asked to see if a special workshop could be held on the County Courthouse expansion project. He would like to see if it could be arranged before the public hearing process. Staff will get back to the commission whether this is possible.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of February 18, 2008, were approved.

Fred Waedt
Secretary